AN

Authentic, Candid, and Circumſtantial

NARRATIVE,

OF THE

Aſtoniſhing Tranſactions at *Stockwell*,

In the County of SURRY,

On MONDAY and TUESDAY, the 6th and 7th Days of JANUARY, 1772,

CONTAINING

A Series of the moſt ſurpriſing and unaccountable EVENTS that ever happened, which continued from firſt to laſt, upwards of Twenty Hours, and at different Places.

Publiſhed with the Conſent and Approbation of the Family and other Parties concerned, to Authenticate which, the original Copy is ſigned by them.

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MDCCLXXII.

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MVSEVM
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NARRATIVE, &c.

BEFORE we enter upon a deſcription of the moſt extraordinary tranſactions that perhaps ever happened, we ſhall begin with an account of the parties who were principally concerned, and in juſtice to them, give their characters; by which means the impartial world may be enabled to form ſome judgment what credit is due to the following narrative.

The events indeed are of ſo ſtrange and ſingular a nature, that we cannot be at all ſurpriſed the public ſhould be doubtful of the truth of them, more eſpecially as there has been too many impoſitions of this ſort; but let us conſider, here are no ſiniſter ends to be anſwered, no con-

contributions to be wiſhed for, nor would be accepted, as the parties are in reputable ſituations and good circumſtances, particularly Mrs. *Golding*, who is a lady of an independent fortune: *Richard Fowler* and his wife might be looked upon as an exception to this aſſertion, but as their loſs was trivial, they muſt be left out of the queſtion, except ſo far as they appear corroborating evidences.

Mr. *Pain's* maid loſt nothing.

How or by what means theſe tranſactions were brought about, time only will diſcover, if that ever happen: We have only now to reſt our confidence on the veracity of the parties, whoſe deſcriptions have been moſt ſtrictly attended to, without the leaſt deviation; nothing here offered is either exaggerated or diminiſhed, the whole ſtated in the cleareſt manner, juſt as they occured, and as ſuch only we lay them before the candid and impartial public.

Mrs. *Golding*, an elderly lady, at *Stockwell*, in *Surry*, at whoſe houſe the tranſactions began, was born in the ſame pariſh

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(of *Lambeth*) has lived in it ever ſince, and has always been well known, and reſpected as a gentlewoman of unblemiſhed honor and character.

Mrs. *Pain*, a niece of Mrs. *Golding*, has been married ſeveral years to Mr. *Pain*, a farmer, at *Brixton-Cauſeway*, a little above Mr. *Angel's*, has ſeveral children, are well known and reſpected in the pariſh.

Mary Martin, Mr. *Pain's* ſervant, an elderly woman, has lived two years with them, and four years with Mrs. *Golding*, where ſhe came from.

Richard Fowler, lives almoſt oppoſite to Mr. *Pain*, at the *Brick-Pound*, an honeſt, induſtrious and ſober man.

Sarah Fowler, wife to the above, an induſtrious and ſober woman.

The above are the ſubſcribing evidences that we muſt reſt the truth of the facts upon: yet there are numbers of other perſons who were eye-witneſſes of many of the tranfactions, during the time they happened, all of whom muſt acknowledge the truth of them.

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Another perſon who bore a principal part in theſe ſcenes was, *Ann Robinſon*, Mrs. *Golding's* maid, a young woman, about twenty years old, who had lived with her but one week and three days.

I ſhall not take up any more of the reader's attention from the narrative, but begin as follows.

On *Monday*, *January* the 6th, 1772, about ten o'clock in the forenoon, as Mrs. *Golding* was in her parlour, ſhe heard the china and glaſſes in the back kitchen tumble down and break; her maid came to her and told her the ſtone plates were falling from the ſhelf; Mrs. *Golding* went into the kitchen and ſaw them broke. Preſently after, a row of plates from the next ſhelf fell down likewiſe, while ſhe was there, and nobody near them; this aſtoniſhed her much, and while ſhe was thinking about it, other things in different places began to tumble about, ſome of them breaking, attended with violent noiſes all over the houſe; a clock tumbled down and the caſe broke; a lanthorn that hung on the ſtaircaſe was thrown down and the glaſs broke

to pieces; an earthen pan of ſalted beef broke to pieces and the beef fell about; all this increaſed her ſurpriſe, and brought ſeveral perſons about her, among whom was Mr. *Rowlidge*, a carpenter, who gave it as his opinion that the foundation was giving way and that the houſe was tumbling down, occaſioned by the too great weight of an additional room erected above: ſo ready are we to diſcover natural cauſes for every thing! But no ſuch thing happened as the reader will find, for whatever was the cauſe, that cauſe ceaſed almoſt as ſoon as Mrs. *Golding* and her maid left any place, and followed them wherever they went. Mrs. *Golding* run into Mr. *Greſham's* houſe, a gentleman living next door to her, where ſhe fainted.

In the interim, Mr. *Rowlidge*, and other perſons were removing Mrs. *Golding's* effects from her houſe, for fear of the conſequences he had prognoſticated. At this time all was quiet; Mrs. *Golding's* maid remaining in her houſe, was gone up ſtairs, and when called upon ſeveral times to come down, for fear of the dangerous

ſituation ſhe was thought to be in, ſhe anſwered very cooly, and after ſome time came down as deliberately, without any ſeeming fearful apprehenſions.

Mrs. *Pain* was ſent for from *Brixton-Cauſeway*, and deſired to come directly, as her aunt was ſuppoſed to be dead; — this was the meſſage to her. When Mrs. *Pain* came, Mrs. *Golding* was come to herſelf, but very faint.

Among the perſons who were preſent, was Mr. *Gardner*, a ſurgeon, of *Clapham*, whom Mrs. *Pain* deſired to bleed her aunt, which he did; Mrs. *Pain* aſked him if the blood ſhould be thrown away; he deſired it might not, as he would examine it when cold. Theſe minute particulars would not be taken notice of, but as a chain to what follows. For the next circumſtance is of a more aſtoniſhing nature than any thing that had preceded it; the blood that was juſt congealed, ſprung out of the baſon upon the floor, and preſently after the baſon broke to pieces: this china baſon was the only thing broke belonging

to

to Mr. *Greſham*; a bottle of rum that ſtood by it broke at the ſame time.

Among the things that were removed to Mr. *Greſham's*, was a tray full of china, &c. a japan bread-baſket, ſome mahogany waiters, with ſome bottles of liquors, jars of pickles, &c. and a pier glaſs, which was taken down by Mr. *Saville*, (a neighbour of Mrs. *Golding's*;) he gave it to one *Robert Hames*, who laid it on the graſs-plat at Mr. *Greſham's*; but before he could put it out of his hands, ſome parts of the frame on each ſide flew off; it raining at that time, Mrs. *Golding* deſired it might be brought into the parlour, where it was put under a ſide-board, and a dreſſing glaſs along with it; it had not been there long before the glaſſes and china which ſtood on the ſide-board, began to tumble about and fall down, and broke both the glaſſes to pieces. Mr. *Saville* and others being aſked to drink a glaſs of wine or rum, both the bottles broke in pieces before they were uncorked.

Mrs. *Golding's* ſurprize and fear increaſing, ſhe did not know what to do or where

go; wherever ſhe and her maid were, theſe ſtrange deſtructive circumſtances followed her, and how to help or free herſelf from them, was not in her power or any other perſon's preſent: her mind was one confuſed chaos, loſt to herſelf and every thing about her, drove from her own home, and afraid there would be none other to receive her; at laſt ſhe left Mr. *Greſham's* and went to Mr. *Mayling's*, a gentleman at the next door, here ſhe ſtaid about three quartures of an hour, during which time nothing happened. Her maid ſtaid at Mr. *Greſham's*, to help put up what few things remained unbroke of her miſtreſs's, in a back apartment, when a jar of pickles that ſtood upon a table, turned upſide down, then a jar of raſburry jam broke to pieces, next two mahogany waiters and a quadrille-box likewiſe broke in pieces.

Mrs. *Pain*, not chuſing her aunt ſhould ſtay too long at Mr. *Mayling's*, for fear of being troubleſome, perſuaded her to go to her houſe at *Ruſh Common*, near *Brixton-Cauſeway*, where ſhe would endeavour to make her as happy as ſhe could, hoping by this

this time all was over, as nothing had happened at that gentleman's houſe while ſhe was there. This was about two o'Clock in the afternoon.

Mr. and Miſs *Greſham* were at Mr. *Pain's* houſe, when Mrs. *Pain*, Mrs. *Golding*, and her maid went there. It being about dinner time they all dined together; in the interim Mrs. *Golding's* ſervant was ſent to her houſe to ſee how things remained. When ſhe returned, ſhe told them nothing had happened ſince they left it. Some time after Mr. *Greſham* and Miſs went home, every thing remaining quiet at Mr. *Pain's*: But about eight o'clock in the evening a freſh ſcene began, the firſt thing that happened, was, a whole row of pewter diſhes, except one, fell from off a ſhelf to the middle of the floor, rolled about a little while, than ſettled, and what is almoſt beyond belief, as ſoon as they were quiet, turned upſide down; they were then put on the dreſſer, and went through the ſame a ſecond time: next fell a whole row of pewter plates from off the ſecond ſhelf over

the

he dreſſer to the ground, and being taken up and put on the dreſſer one in another, they were thrown down again.

The next thing was two eggs that were upon one of the pewter ſhelves, one of them flew off, croſſed the kitchen, ſtruck a cat on the head, and then broke to pieces.

Next Mary *Martin*, Mrs. *Pain's* ſervant, went to ſtir the kitchen fire, ſhe got to the right hand ſide of it, being a large chimney as is uſual in farm houſes, a peſtle and mortar that ſtood nearer the left hand end of the chimney ſhelf, jumped about ſix feet on the floor. Then went candleſticks and other braſſes: ſcarce any thing remaining in its place. After this the glaſſes and china were put down on the floor for fear of undergoing the ſame fate, they preſently began to dance and tumble about, and then broke to pieces. A tea pot that was among them, flew to Mrs. Golding's maid's foot and ſtruck it.

A glaſs tumbler that was put on the floor jumped about two feet and then broke. Another that ſtood by it jumped about at the ſame time, but did not break till ſome hours after, when it jumped

again

again and then broke. A china bowl that ſtood in the parlour jumped from the floor, to behind a table that ſtood there. This was moſt aſtoniſhing, as the diſtance from where it ſtood was between ſeven and eight feet, but was not broke. It was put back by *Richard Fowler*, to its place, where it remained ſome time, and then flew to pieces.

The next thing that followed was a muſtard pot, that jumped out of a cloſet and was broke. A ſingle cup that ſtood upon the table, (almoſt the only thing remaining) jumped up, flew acroſs the kitchen, ringing like a bell, and then was daſhed to pieces againſt the dreſſer. A candleſtick that ſtood on the chimney ſhelf flew croſs the kitchen to the parlour door, at about fifteen feet diſtance. A teakettle under the dreſſer, was thrown out about two feet, another kettle that ſtood at one end of the range, was thrown againſt the iron that is fixed to prevent children falling into the fire. A tumbler with rum and water in it, that ſtood upon a waiter upon a table in the parlour, jumped about ten feet and

was

was broke. The table than fell down, and along with it a ſilver tankard belonging to Mrs. Golding, the waiter in which had ſtood the tumbler and a candleſtick. A caſe bottle then flew to pieces.

The next circumſtance, was a ham that hung in one ſide of the kitchen chimney, it raiſed itſelf from the hook and fell down to the ground. Some time after, another ham that hung on the other ſide of the chimney, likewiſe under went the ſame fate. Then a flitch of bacon which hung up in the ſame chimney fell down.

All the family were eye witneſſes to theſe circumſtances as well as other perſons, ſome of whom were ſo alarmed and ſhocked, that they could not bear to ſtay, and was happy in getting away, though the unhappy family were left in the midſt of their diſtreſſes. Moſt of the genteel families around, were continually ſending to enquire after them, and whether all was over or not. Is it not ſurpriſing that ſome among them had not the inclination and reſolution to try to unravel this moſt intricate affair, at a time when it would have been in their power to have done ſo;

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there certainly was ſufficient time for ſo doing, as the whole from firſt to laſt continued upwards of twenty hours.

At all the times of action, Mrs. Golding Servant was walking backwards and forwards, either in the kitchen or parlour, or wherever ſome of the family happened to be. Nor could they get her to ſit down five minutes together, except at one time for about half an hour towards the morning, when the family were at prayers in the parlour; then all was quiet; but in the midſt of the greateſt confuſion, ſhe was as much compoſed as at any other time, and with uncommon coolneſs of temper adviſed her miſtreſs not to be alarmed or uneaſy, as ſhe ſaid theſe things could not be helped. Thus ſhe argued as if they were common occurrences which muſt happen in every family.

This advice ſurpriſed and ſtartled her miſtreſs, almoſt as much as the circumſtances that occaſioned it. For how can we ſuppoſe that a girl of about twenty years old, (an age when female timidity is too often aſſiſted by ſuperſtition) could

remain in the midſt of ſuch calamitous circumſtances (except they proceeded from cauſes beſt known to herſelf) and not be ſtruck with the ſame terror as every other perſon was who was preſent. Theſe reflections led Mr. Pain, and at the end of the tranſactions, likewiſe Mrs. Golding, to think that ſhe was not altogether ſo unconcerned as ſhe appeared to be. But hitherto, the whole remains myſterious and unravelled.

About ten o'clock at night, they ſent over the way to Richard Fowler, to deſire he would come and ſtay with them. He came and continued till one in the morning, and was ſo terrified that he could remain no longer.

As Mrs. Golding could not be perſuaded to go to bed, Mrs. Payne at that time (one o'clock) made an excuſe to go up ſtairs to her youngeſt child, under pretence of getting it to ſleep, but ſhe really acknowledges it was through fear, as ſhe declares ſhe could not ſit up to ſee ſuch ſtrange things going on, as every thing one after another was broke, till there was not above two or three cups and ſaucers

cers remaining out of a conſiderable quantity of china, &c. which was deſtroyed to the amount of ſome pounds.

About five o'clock on Tueſday morning, Mrs. Golding went up to her niece, and deſired her to get up, as the noiſes and deſtruction were ſo great ſhe could continue in the houſe no longer. At this time all the tables, chairs, drawers, &c. where tumbling about. When Mrs. Pain came down, it was amazing beyond all deſcription! their only ſecurity then was to quit the houſe for fear of the ſame cataſtrophe, as had been expected the morning before, at Mrs. Golding's: in conſequence of this reſolution, Mrs. Golding and her maid went over the way to Richard Fowler's: When Mrs. Golding's maid had ſeen her ſafe to Richard Fowler's, ſhe came back to Mrs. Pain, to help her to dreſs the children in the barn, where ſhe had carried them for fear of the houſe falling. At this time all was quiet they then went to Fowler's, and then began the ſame ſcene as had happened at the other places. It muſt be remarked, all

was quiet here as well as elſewhere, till the maid returned.

When they got to Mr. Fowler's, he began to light a fire in his back room. When done, he put the candle and candleſtick upon a table in the fore room. This apartment Mrs. Golding and her maid had paſſed through. Another candleſtick with a tin lamp in it that ſtood by it, were both daſhed together, and fell to the ground. A lanthorn with which Mrs. Golding was lighted croſs the road, ſprung from a hook to the ground, and a quantity of oil ſpilled on the floor. The laſt thing was the baſket of coals tumbled over; the coals rolling about the room; the maid then deſired Richard Fowler not to let her miſtreſs remain there, as ſhe ſaid, wherever ſhe was, the ſame things would follow. In conſequence of this advice, and fearing greater loſſes to himſelf, he deſired ſhe would quit his houſe; but firſt begged her to conſider within herſelf, for her own and the public ſake, whether or not ſhe had not been guilty of ſome atrocious crime, for which providence was determined

ned to purſue her on this ſide the grave, for he could not help thinking, ſhe was the object that was to be made an example to poſterity, by the all ſeeing eye of providence, for crimes which but too often none but that providence can penetrate, and by ſuch means as theſe bring to light.

Thus was this poor gentlewoman's meaſure of affliction complete, not only to have undergone all which has been related, but to have added to it the character of a bad and wicked woman, when till this time, ſhe was eſteemed as a moſt deſerving perſon. In candour to Fowler, he could not be blamed; what could he do? what would any man have done that was ſo circumſtanced? Mrs. Golding ſoon ſatisfied him; ſhe told him ſhe would not ſtay in his houſe, or any other perſons, as her conſcience was quite clear, and ſhe could as well wait the will of providence in her own houſe as in any other place whatever; upon which ſhe and her maid went home, Mr. Pain went with them. After they had got to Mrs. Golding's the laſt time, the ſame tranſactions once more began upon the remains that were left.

A nine gallon cask of beer, that was in the cellar, the door being open, and no perſon near it, turned upſide down.

A pail of water that ſtood on the floor, boiled like a pot.

A box of candles fell from a ſhelf in the kitchen to the floor, they rolled out, but none were broke.

A round mahogany table overſet in the parlour,

Mr. Pain then deſired Mrs. Golding to ſend her maid for his wife to come to them, when ſhe was gone all was quiet; upon her return ſhe was immediately diſcharged, and no diſturbances have happened ſince; this was between ſix and ſeven o'clock on Tueſday morning.

At Mrs. Golding's were broke the quantity of three pails full of glaſs, china, &c.

At Mrs. Pain's they filled two pails.

Thus ends the narrative; a true, circumſtantial, and faithful account of which I have laid before the public; for ſo doing, I hope to eſcape its cenſure; I have neither exaggerated or diminiſhed one circumſtance to my knowledge; and have endea-

deavoured as much as poſſible, throughout the whole, to ſtate only the facts, without preſuming to obtrude my opinion on them. If I have in part hinted any thing that may appear unfavourable to the girl, it proceeded not from a determination to charge her with the cauſe, right or wrong, but only from a ſtrict adherence to truth, moſt ſincerely wiſhing this extraordinary affair may be unravelled.

The above narrative, is abſolutely and ſtrictly true, in witneſs whereof we have ſet our hands this eleventh day of January, 1772,

MARY GOLDING.
JOHN PAIN.
MARY PAIN.
RICHARD FOWLER.
SARAH FOWLER.
MARY MARTIN.

The original copy of this narrative, ſigned as above, with the parties own hands, is in the hands of J. MARKS, Bookſeller, in *St. Martin's Lane*, to ſatisfy any perſon who chuſes to apply to him for the inſpection of the ſame.

FINIS.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM